

# Admissions Policy

## For Admissions in September 2017

### THE ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO RIVERS ACADEMY WEST LONDON

This document sets out the admission arrangements for Rivers Academy West London.

The Academy will act in accordance with, and will ensure that the Independent Appeal Panel acts in accordance with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes of practice (the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be reference to the Aspirations Academies Trust, which governs Rivers Academy West London.

Rivers Academy West London will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by Hounslow LA.

Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct Rivers Academy West London to admit a named student to the Academy on application from an LA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy.

A rationale for the admission arrangements across the Aspirations Academies trust can be found on the Trust website: [www.aspirationsacademies.org](http://www.aspirationsacademies.org)

### ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS APPROVED BY SECRETARY OF STATE

The admission arrangements for Rivers Academy West London for the year 2017/18 and for subsequent years are:

- Rivers Academy West London has an agreed admission number of 180 students in Year 7. The Academy will accordingly admit 180 students into Year 7 if sufficient applications are received.
- Rivers Academy West London has an agreed admission number of 60 students in Year 12 for students from **outside Rivers Academy West London**.
- Rivers Academy West London may set a higher admission number as its Published Admission Number for any specific year. The Academy is not required to consult on any proposed increase to the PAN; however it must notify the Local Authority of the increase and specify the changes on the Academy website.
- Students will not be admitted above the Published Admission Number unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

## **PROCESS OF APPLICATION FOR YEAR 7**

- The Local Authority Common Admissions Form (CAF - secondary) must be completed and returned to the Local Authority for all admissions to Rivers Academy West London by 31<sup>st</sup> October.
- All applicants\* to the Academy will be required to sit a Cognitive Ability Test. Rivers Academy West London is measured for academic performance against national averages. The Academy's aim is to provide places for local children within a profile that compares to the national distribution of ability. This is achieved through the use of three ability bands – low, middle and high. To allocate Year 7 students to the appropriate band all applicants to the Academy are required to sit a Cognitive Ability Test. As these tests are conducted before the students join the academy this also allows the academy to provide an individual appropriate education for each student from the moment they arrive in September. Students are allocated to an ability band on the basis of their Cognitive Ability Test score. There will be 3 ability bands (low, middle, high) - the percentage of places available in each band will be determined by the profile of the national distribution of ability. This will be based on the national average provided in the Department for Education's school performance tables from the previous year. Definitions are based on the KS2 test results attained by pupils on completion of the primary school phase.

*\*It is not compulsory for the following children to sit the Cognitive Ability Test:*

- *Children whose statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school*
- *Looked after children (Note 1) and all previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, (Note 2) or became subject to a child arrangements order (Note 3) or special guardianship order (Note 4).*

*However, it is strongly recommended that these pupils do sit the test as the test will enable appropriate interventions and support to be readily available from the start of term, as well as enabling placement in the correct band.*

- The Test will be sat in the September/October of the year that applications for places are made. There will be a choice of test days available which will be publicised on the academy's website. This means that Year 6 pupils who are considering applying for a place at the Academy in October 2016 will sit the test in September or October 2016. Any student ill on the day of the test will be provided with an opportunity to sit the test on an alternative day, provided the illness is supported by an official medical note.
- Any student who applies for a place at the Academy without having sat the Cognitive Ability Test will have to sit the test before the final place allocations are made in March of the year of admission. *As the test is administered on-line it is relatively easy to arrange a suitable test date.*
- Students with Special Educational Needs, who choose to sit the test, are not given any additional help as the test is designed to pick up on those needs.
- The Cognitive Ability Test is not a pass or fail test. It is used to allocate each applicant to an ability band on the basis of their test score. Parents will be informed of the test result within two weeks of the test being taken.
- An advert inviting all interested Year 6 pupils to apply to sit the Rivers Academy West London Cognitive Ability Test will be placed in local newspapers and on the academy website as well as through a letter to parents sent out to all local primary and junior schools within a two mile radius of the academy. Parents will be invited to contact the Academy to book an appointment for their child to sit the test. Following this application to sit the test, a letter confirming the test date and time will be sent out by post or email. Students who apply to the academy but have not yet sat the

test will be sent an invitation by letter or email using the information provided on the Common Application Form.

- **Notification of Offer of Places:** Parents will be informed by Hounslow Local Authority (or their home authority if they do not live in Hounslow) which school they have been allocated in writing by a letter posted on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Parents are asked to confirm their acceptance of the offer with the Local Authority in which they live by 16<sup>th</sup> March.
- Parents and students will then be offered an opportunity to visit the academy before they start in September to meet staff as part of preparing them to give them the best possible start in the academy.

## **Procedures where the Academy is oversubscribed for places in Year 7**

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below:

Applications will be considered against the ability band in which the applicant is placed by the Cognitive Ability Test score. The number of places available in each ability band will be based on the national average provided in the Department for Education's school performance tables from the previous year. Definitions are based on the KS2 test results attained by pupils on completion of the primary school phase. After the admission of students whose statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school, the following criteria will be applied to determine those children who will be offered places within each band.

The criteria are listed in priority order:

1. Looked after children (*Note 1*) and all previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, (*Note 2*) or became subject to a child arrangements order (*Note 3*) or special guardianship order (*Note 4*). Such students will be given top priority in each band before the oversubscription criteria is applied.
2. Children with a sibling already at the Academy, ordered by shortest distance between home and Rivers Academy West London (*see Note 5, Note 6 and Note 7*)
3. Children who currently attend a Primary Aspirations Academy\*, currently Oriel Academy West London and Oak Hill Academy West London, ordered by shortest distance between home and Rivers Academy West London (*see Notes 6 and 7*). ***\*The philosophy of the Aspirations Academies Trust considers all-through, age 2-19 education to be very effective practice and brings many educational benefits to our young people and their parents. Rivers Academy works very closely with the staff and pupils at both Oak Hill Academy West London and Oriel Academy West London with many shared staff and joint initiatives in place. Pupils from both Oriel Academy West London and Oak Hill Academy West London have attended Rivers Academy West London for many years, this number will increase as the philosophical, educational and operational ties between the academies strengthens further. The Aspirations Academies Trust publicises to parents of pre-school age the advantages to them of choosing and all-through age education in Feltham. The philosophy of the Trust is to develop a small District of local schools in the Feltham area providing guaranteed all-through age education for 180 students in each year group.***

4. Children of teaching staff in the following circumstances (*see Note 9*):
  - a. children of appointed staff, filling a post with a “demonstrable skills shortage” (School Admissions Code 2012)
  - b. where the member of teaching staff is or will have been employed at the school for at least two years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made.
5. Children who have the shortest distance between home and Rivers Academy West London (*see Notes 6, 7 and 8*).

**If at the end of this process there are unallocated places in any band** these will be filled by unallocated applicants from the next nearest band(s) using the same allocation criteria set out above. For example, if there are spaces in the lower band then they will be filled by children on the waiting list from the middle band. If the middle band has unallocated places and there are unallocated pupils in both the two other bands then each alternate place will be filled by either the lower band or the higher band, starting with the lower band.

If at the end of this process there is a situation where two or more pupils are ranked with the exact same priority, the process to establish which child will be offered a place next will be conducted randomly through the use of an electronic random sorter. This random allocation will be made using an electronic random sorter managed by an appointed person drawing the names. The appointed person will be an independent administrator who has no involvement in the academy.

*Notes:*

1. A ‘looked after child’ is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (*see the definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989*) at the time of making an application to a school.
2. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (*see Section 12 adoption orders*) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (*see Section 46 adoption orders*).
3. Under the provisions of s.14 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amend section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders.
4. See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a ‘special guardianship order’ as an order appointing one or more individual to be a child’s special guardian (or special guardians).
5. In all categories, priority will be given to those who have a brother or sister attending Rivers Academy West London at the time of admission but not application. This means that there will be **no** sibling connection for admission purposes as follows:
  - a) applicants for entry to Year 7 if they have a brother or sister in Year 11 unless the CAPF records an expressed intention of the sibling staying on into Year 12.
  - b) applicants for entry to Year 7 if they have a brother or sister in Year 13.The definition of a brother or sister is:
  - A brother or sister sharing the same parents
  - Half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one common parent
  - Step-brother or step-sister, where two children are related by a parent’s marriage

- *Adopted or foster children*

*Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins or triplets or other children from multiple births living at a single address, the Local Authority, on behalf of Rivers Academy West London's Admission Authority, will use random allocation to determine who will be offered a place at Rivers Academy West London.*

6. *The home address of a child is considered to be his/her permanent residence. The address must be the child's only or main residence. Documentary evidence may be required. Where a child spends time with parents at more than one address, then the address given should be the one that they live at (i.e. sleep at) for the majority of term-time weekdays. Where care is split equally between mother and father, parents must name which address is to be used for the purpose of allocating a school place.*

7. *Priority will be given to those children who live closest to Rivers Academy West London:*

*Distance criterion. Distance will be measured by computer software based on Ordnance Survey and postal address data. The software measures using public roads and footpaths adopted and recorded by Hounslow Council's Highways Team. When using roads for measurement purposes the software measures along the middle of the road. It starts from a point in the footprint of the property provided as the child's address and continues by the shortest available route to the nearest of the school gates which is used by pupils to enter the school grounds. Blocks of flats are treated as one address. In blocks of flats, priority will normally be given to the lowest flat number. Addresses in private roads will measure from the footprint of the property, along the middle of the private road leading to the public road/footpath as adopted and recorded by Hounslow Highways Team. Not used are routes using common land<sup>1</sup>, open spaces, public parks, subways or footpaths not adopted by the Highways Team<sup>2</sup>.*

*1. Except the Chiswick Common footpath between the junction at Chiswick Common Road and Turnham Green Terrace.*

*2. Except the pedestrian footpath at the eastern end of The Ride.*

*The route from home to school has been measured using the shortest available route. The start point (footprint of the property) is provided by Ordnance Survey from information compiled from the Royal Mail or LA. The positioning of front doors, driveways and back gates are not relevant to the route or the measurement and not programmed to be used by the measuring system. The shortest available route is established using an algorithm within the bespoke software used by the LA. This software is called RouteFinder and is produced by Higher Mapping Solutions. This programme integrates with the LA's database. The end point of the route is the nearest of the school gates which is used for pupils to enter the school grounds. The location of these gates has been set by the LA and consulted with each individual school to ensure accurate placement of the gate and its availability for use.*

*The Local Authority cannot take a measurement from another measuring system into account. Other measuring systems may give a different measurement.*

8. *Children of Service Personnel will not be disadvantaged in the admissions process. Families of UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants are subject to frequent movement within the*

UK and from abroad. An official letter from the MOD, FCO or GCHQ should be submitted with the application detailing relocation date and a unit postal address or quarters in Hounslow and we will arrange for that address to be used throughout the admission process.

9. Under the oversubscription criteria the word staff will mean: Teaching staff who have been continuously employed by the school for a period of at least two years for the purpose of working in the school as follows:

- All full time teaching staff
- All part time teaching staff with a 45% and above timetable

The two years qualification period may be waived if a post is hard to fill.

The definition of staff does not include contract staff. If a service has been 'in house' and is subsequently 'contracted out' children or staff will no longer be eligible for priority admission under this criterion. The definition does not include peripatetic staff.

## **Appeals Process**

Unsuccessful applicants may appeal for a place in the academy. Parents wishing to appeal should contact the Civic Centre in Hounslow to request the relevant forms. Appeals will be heard by a panel which is independent of the Academy and the Governors.

## **Late Applications**

Applications received after the closing date will only be considered alongside those received by the closing date under the following circumstances:

- The family was unable to complete a LA Common Application form before the closing date because they moved into the academy's catchment area after the issue of application forms.  
OR
- The family was unable to comply with the admissions timetable because of exceptional circumstances which prevented the application arriving on time – the circumstances must be given in writing and attached to the application form.

Applications received after the notification date (i.e. after places have been offered) will be added to the list of continued interest in admission criteria order. The list of continued interest for Year 7 will be kept until the last day of December of the year of admission. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or their name added to the list. This means that a child's position on any waiting list can move down as well as up.

## **Admission of Children Outside of their Normal Year Group**

The Aspirations Academies Trust as a general rule does not recommend the admission of children outside of their normal year group. However, the decision to admit a child outside of their normal Year group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the

child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. In each case, a meeting will take place between the Principal and the parent(s)/carer(s) prior to a decision being made. The Principal of the Academy will discuss the issue with either the Executive Principal or Chief Executive before making a decision. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

### **Withdrawing an offer or a place**

The admission authority, The Aspirations Academies Trust, **will not** withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the admission authority **will** give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application **will** be considered afresh. If the child is not offered a place at the academy based on the new application, the right to appeal still stands.

### **Admission to Post 16 provision**

Every student in Year 11 at Rivers Academy West London is entitled to a place in the Sixth Form providing there is a course suitable for him/her and the student meets the entry requirements. Entry into Year 12 from students outside Rivers Academy West London has been set at 60. After the admission of students whose statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school, the following criteria will be applied:

#### **Over-subscription Admissions Criteria:**

- a) Looked after children (*Note 1 - see Notes above*) and all previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, (*Note 2*) or became subject to a child arrangements order (*Note 3*) or special guardianship order (*Note 4*). These students should meet the academic requirements for the level of course applied for as published in the Academy prospectus.
- b) Children with a sibling already at the Academy, ordered by shortest distance between home and Rivers Academy West London (see Note 5, Note 6 and Note 7)
- c) Children who have the shortest distance between home and Rivers Academy West London (see Notes 6, 7 and 8).

#### **Sixth Form Application Procedure:**

All external students interested in a place at Rivers Academy West London Sixth Form should complete an application form available directly from the Academy or online from the academy website.

#### **Late Applications:**

Late applications will be considered, although it will be more difficult to comply with subject preferences. Applications received after the notification date (after places have been offered) will be

added to the list of continued interest in admission criteria order. The list of continued interest for Year 12 will be kept until the last day of December of the year of admission.

## **Arrangements for In Year Admissions**

- All applications made during the academic year (in year admissions) including applications in and outside of the normal year of entry for Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, must be made to the Academy (the application form is available on the academy website). All such applications will be considered and if the year group applied for has a place available in the appropriate band the Academy will admit the child unless the applicant has significant behavioural issues, in which case the child will be referred to the Local Authority Fair Access panel. (Such refusals will only occur where the student concerned has been previously excluded from two or more schools or where special circumstances apply as specified in the Admissions Code. However, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit such students and such a direction will be binding.) If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria above for Year 7 or for post-16 places shall apply. This will require the applicant sitting the cognitive ability test.
- Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.
- A waiting list will not be held by the Academy for In Year Admissions in Year 8, 9, 10 or 11 or for In Year admissions for Year 7 after 31<sup>st</sup> December of the first year. All In Year applications will need to be made to the Academy and will be allocated under the admissions criteria, according to their ability band, (This will require the applicant sitting the cognitive ability test), when a place becomes available. Any places allocated under in-year admissions will be notified to the LA to allow it to update its records.
- Although most children will be admitted to the Academy within their own age group, the Academy will make decisions on the year group of entry on the basis of the circumstances of each individual case. Parents do not have a right of Appeal if a place is offered in a year group other than the year group in which they applied for.

### **Fair Access Admissions:**

Rivers Academy West London will adhere to the Fair Access Protocol as determined by the LA to ensure that 'Hard to Place' students will receive a suitable school place. Managed Move requests for students from other Secondary Schools will also be given consideration as part of the adherence to the National Admissions Code.

## **ANNUAL PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Consultation**

Rivers Academy West London will set admission arrangements annually. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements there will be a public consultation on these arrangements. If no changes are made to admission arrangements the Academy consultation will only take place at least every 7 years.